

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY - E-MAIL

Section 1. Purpose and Scope.

1.1. Purpose.

1.1.1. To establish a policy regarding the use of E-Mail by individuals using WVBEP-provided information technology (IT) resources.

1.2. Scope.

1.2.1. Compliance with the provisions of this policy applies to any individual performing work using WVBEP-provided IT resources.

1.2.2. Violations of this policy will subject an individual to disciplinary action ranging from a warning, suspension of privileges, or dismissal from the WVBEP and prosecution under state and/or federal statutes - depending on the circumstances of the incident.

Section 2. Policy Notification.

2.1. Any individual requiring the use of a WVBEP-provided IT resources shall be made aware of this policy by the supervisor granting access to the WVBEP-provided IT resources prior to being granted access. The individual must indicate in writing that s/he has read this policy by signing in the space provided on the last page of this policy.

Section 3. General Understandings.

3.1. Access to WVBEP systems is a privilege, not a right. Access to any WVBEP-provided IT resource may be denied or revoked at any time for any reason without notice. Eligible individuals may be granted access and privileges to the WVBEP E-Mail by following the proper request/approval procedure.

3.2. E-Mail is a major means of communication in WVBEP and state government in general, and it offers an efficient method of conducting business. E-Mail, as defined in this policy, consists of the act of sending and receiving messages electronically whether if through the Internet or any other system available to individuals using WVBEP-provided IT resources.

There are number of characteristics that distinguish E-Mail from other means of communication:

3.2.1. As part of standard practice to prevent loss of data, the E-Mail system and the systems involved in the transmission and storage of E-Mail messages usually are "backed up" on a routine basis. This process results in copying data, such as the content of an E-Mail message, onto storage media that may be retained for periods of time in locations unknown to the sender or recipient of a message.

3.2.2. While password-protecting your E-Mail account is beyond usual measures taken to protect access to paper records and telephones, it does not confer a special status on E-Mail records with respect to applicability of laws, policies, and practices.

3.2.3. In the course of their work, MIS managers, network and computer operations personnel, or system administrators may be required to monitor the network and the E-Mail system. It should be assumed that the content of E-Mail messages may be seen by these authorized individuals during the performance of their duties.

3.2.4. No system of communication is completely secure, including E-Mail,. Just as with paper communications, an E-Mail message can be forged, and it can be distributed beyond the address list originally defined by its author.

3.2.5. Any file can be transmitted via E-Mail. You must always check all files attached to E-Mail

messages for viruses before they are viewed or executed on WVBEP-provided IT resources.

3.2.6. E-Mail and other electronic files may be accessible through the discovery process in the event of litigation.

3.3. Use of WVBEP-provided IT resources shall be consistent with the specific objectives of the job, project, and/or task for which the use of IT resources was authorized. At all times of the day or night, WVBEP-provided IT resources are intended for WVBEP work-related usage and not for any individual's personal purposes (without the explicit prior knowledge and permission from the Division Director). Individuals are encouraged to obtain their own subscription to an E-Mail or Internet service provider at their own cost and use that service for personal E-Mail.

3.4. As a benefit, employees are permitted to use their WVBEP-provided IT resources for college studies already approved and being reimbursed by WVBEP. However, the employee must obtain the Division Director's knowledge and approval in advance. Further, such personal usage must take place on the employee's own time and cannot conflict with WVBEP interests.

3.5. Ethical and legal standards that apply to the use of E-Mail derive directly from standards of common sense and common decency that apply to the use of any shared resources. The WVBEP depends first upon the spirit of mutual respect and cooperation that has been fostered to resolve differences and ameliorate problems that arise from time to time.

3.6. The nature of Internet E-Mail provides the ability to send/receive electronic mail messages to/from any individual or entity that has an E-Mail address. Individuals are advised that they may receive mail messages (with attached material) which may be offensive and/or objectionable in nature or content. Further, individuals are advised that the WVBEP is not responsible for the contents of any E-Mail sent to individuals using WVBEP-provided IT resources.

3.7. The WVBEP reserves the right to monitor all transmissions and/or examine all of its system configurations, as well as the files on those systems, for such purposes as: maintaining business continuity in the absence of employees; responding to a complaint of computer abuse, such as harassment; or protecting WVBEP resources from extensive or expensive unauthorized misuse.

3.8. The WVBEP neither guarantees against, nor shall it be responsible for, the destruction, corruption or disclosure of personal material on or by its computer resources. Specifically, the WVBEP reserves the right to remove, replace or reconfigure its computer resources without formal notice to employees (despite the fact that advance notice will normally be given).

Section 4. Responsibilities of Users of WVBEP-provided IT Resources.

4.1. To respect the privacy of other individuals - e.g., you shall not enter into another individual's electronic mailbox, read another individual's electronic mail without his/her permission, or intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, tapes, or passwords belonging to other individuals of the service.

4.2. To respect the rights of other individuals - e.g., you shall comply with all WVBEP Personnel policies regarding sexual, racial, and other forms of harassment.

4.3. To respect the legal protection provided by copyright and licensing of programs and data - e.g., you shall not make copies of a licensed computer program to avoid paying additional license fees or to share it with other individuals.

4.4. To respect the intended usage of resources - e.g., you shall use only the user ID and password, funds, transactions, data, and processes assigned to you (by the WVBEP's selected Internet service provider, Division Directors, unit managers, supervisors, team leaders, or project leaders) for the purposes specified, and shall not access or use other individuals' user IDs and passwords, funds,

transactions, data, or processes unless explicitly authorized to do so by the appropriate authority.

4.5. To respect the intended usage of systems for electronic message exchange (i.e., E-Mail) - e.g., you shall not send: forged electronic mail; mail that will intimidate or harass other individuals; mail that involves the use of obscene, bigoted, or abusive language or images; chain messages that can interfere with the efficiency of the system; or promotional mail for profit-making purposes.

4.6. To respect the integrity of the system or network - e.g., you shall not intentionally develop or use programs, transactions, data, or processes that harass, or may be used to harass, other individuals or infiltrate the system or damage or alter the software or data components of a system.

4.7. To adhere to all WVBEF policies, guidelines, and procedures including, but not limited to: the proper use of information technology resources; the ethical and legal use of software; and the ethical and legal use of administrative data.

4.8. To report any violations of this policy to your supervisor or other appropriate authority - failure to report possible IT resource misuse will be interpreted as a violation of this policy.

Section 5. Acceptable Uses (not all inclusive).

5.1. To provide for and facilitate communications with WVBEF personnel, citizens, employers of state residents, other state agencies, federal agencies, and business partners of state agencies.

5.2. To communicate, exchange, and debate issues related to professional development of your professional/vocational discipline if applicable to your present job assignment - e.g., professional society, university association, government advisory panel, and/or standardization activities.

5.3. To apply for or administer grants or contracts for work-related applications.

5.4. To announce products or services for use within the scope of work-related activities/applications, but not for unsolicited commercial advertisement of any kind.

5.5. To deliver WVBEF products and services to citizens, employers of state residents, other state agencies, federal agencies, etc.

Section 6. Unacceptable Uses (not all inclusive).

6.1. To use for illegal or malicious purposes.

6.2. To share data which is not authorized for distribution.

6.3. To use profane, obscene, offensive or inflammatory speech, or to personally attack any individual or entity.

6.4. To knowingly or inadvertently spread a computer virus - do not import files from unknown or questionable sources.

6.5. To deliberately attempt to degrade or disrupt the performance of WVBEF computer systems or networks, or any other computer system.

6.6. To transmit confidential or "secret" information across the Internet without encryption.

6.7. To mis-represent oneself or the State.

6.8. To send chain letters, etc.

6.9. To broadcast a bulletin to all employees without obtaining authorization from your immediate supervisor.

6.10. To display or transmit sexually explicit or suggestive materials.

6.11. For personal and/or profit-making purposes.

Section 7. E-Mail Etiquette.

7.1. Common sense and good taste dictate the following tips for proper E-Mail use:

7.1.1. Never forget that the person on the other side is human.

7.1.2. Remember that people all over the world could read your words.

7.1.3. Be brief.

7.1.4. Your news postings reflect upon you, the WVBEP, and the State of WV.

7.1.5. Use descriptive titles in your subject line.

7.1.6. Only post a message once.

7.1.7. Read all follow-ups and don't repeat what has already been said.

7.1.8. Cite appropriate references.

Section 8. Supplements and Exceptions.

8.1. Supplements to this E-Mail policy may be issued by each WVBEP Division to address specific concerns or operational needs. However, any exceptions to this policy shall require prior written approval of the Director of MIS and the Commissioner of the WVBEP.

Sign: _____ Date: ____/____/____

I acknowledge that I have read the WVBEP Acceptable Use Policy - E-Mail on the above date.